LABOUR MONTHLY

Founded 1921 Editor : R. Palme Dutt

REQUIEM FOR THE HERALD

The Editor

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EORGE ELVIN

lms: The Lion's Tale

FIDEL CASTRO

Five years of Progress

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REFLECTIONS ON EAST AFRICA

Jack Woddis

LECTION
EAR

Neither Socialist Nor Democratic, J. R. Campbell
The Press in Election Year, Allen Hutt
The Courts and the Trade Unions, D. N. Pritt, Q.C.

MARCH 1964

Two Shillings

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LABOUR MONTHLY

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Notes of the Month

REQUIEM FOR THE HERALD

If nine-tenths of the workers do not buy this paper, if two-thirds do not pay special contributions (e.g. 1 penny weekly) for their paper—it will be no workers' newspaper.

(LENIN, letter to Tom Bell, August 13, 1921.)

February 17, 1964

In political parlance the term to 'sell', 'sell out' or 'sell down the river' is commonly used to describe an act of black perfidy without necessarily implying that coin of the realm has actually passed. But the *Daily Herald*—that once glorious and long since unhappy and prostituted product of the sacrifices and dreams of generations of socialist workers—has now at last in the final act, fifty-three years after its original inception as a strike sheet, been literally sold by the knights and gentlemen of the Trades Union Congress for cash down. True, it has not been sold for thirty pieces of silver. Some allowance must be made for inflation since those days. To use the terminology appropriate to the transaction, it has been sold for seventy-five grand.

A Capital Gain

The original capital with which the early pioneers floated the *Daily Herald* on April 15, 1912 (after its first run as a strike sheet between January and April 1911) was £300. Quite a capital gain, though not for the pioneers. The odd thing about the transaction is that the Trades Union Congress was selling a product which it had never created. For the truth is that the old militant *Daily Herald*, which in its final battered days the Trades Union Congress has now so profitably sold, had to struggle for existence in face of the venomous hostility and denunciation on the part of the dominant leadership of the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party, which proclaimed it an enemy of the labour movement. Indeed, as we shall have occasion to see, the old *Daily Herald*, supported against all the bottomless coffers of the millionaire press by the tireless collections of its devoted readers and their old Herald League, bore a position in many respects similar to that of the *Daily Worker* today, kept alive in face of the many times more powerful barrage of the far more concentrated multi-millionaire press combines today only by

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the tireless devotion of its readers and their Fighting Fund. Save for one important difference. The *Daily Worker* can never be sold; for it has behind it what the *Herald* lacked—a political party of the working class and socialism.

Labour Monthly and Daily Herald

It is not entirely inappropriate that our journal should offer a few retrospective words of funeral obsequies on the passing of the *Herald*, since, although now only in our forty-third year, and thus ten years junior to the original *Daily Herald* strike sheet, and nine years junior to its launching as a working class daily newspaper in 1912, our journal from its foundation had many close links with the then still relatively militant *Daily Herald* which was revived, following the war-time limitation to weekly production, in 1919. Most of its best known political writers, including George Lansbury the Editor; William Mellor, who subsequently became Editor; W. N. Ewer, then and still Foreign Editor (in his grand old anti-imperialist days before he became a Commander of the British Empire); G. D. H. Cole, its industrial expert; Gerald Gould, its leader writer; Walter Holmes, who alone still valiantly carries forward the flag of independent working class journalism on the staff of the *Daily Worker*, and many others were contributors to *Labour Monthly*. This relative interchangeability of staff at that time could sometimes cause amusing complications, as in the case of the article which had to be published under a pseudonym during the first Labour Government, and which bore such an appearance of being based on accurate inside information as to give rise to a lively discussion in the Cabinet on the question of who could be the author. Those were days when the subsequent right-wing bristling stockade of bans and barriers had not yet been erected to prevent co-operation of all who wished to fight for socialism. In those days it was still possible for a new book by the Editor of *Labour Monthly* to receive a three-column feature review by Sidney Webb in the *Daily Herald*. The modern climate of the witch hunt, imposed silences, covert McCarthyism, and suppression of genuine controversy, fostered by the bans of Transport House, would have seemed incredible to socialists in those days.

How Official Labour Fought the Daily Herald

One of the odd features about the present lamentations in some Labour and trade union quarters over the loss of the *Daily Herald* is that they really appear to be under the impression that the *Daily*

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Herald was originally the beloved and cherished organ of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress, which has now been shamefully sold to the newspaper press combines; that the labour movement in consequence 'has now no daily newspaper', and must make a supreme effort and gather funds and levy trade unionists to establish a 'daily newspaper of the labour movement'. In all these lamentations and ardent resolutions the fact that the *Daily Worker* exists and has carried on now for thirty-three years is commonly left out of account. This omission is not so much out of ill will to the *Daily Worker* in these quarters, since the value and efforts of the *Daily Worker* are in fact recognised by many of these sections, even though often with a tribute of silence, but the *Daily Worker* is not regarded by some of these sections as possible to consider as a 'daily newspaper of the labour movement', because it does not represent the policy of official Labour and is not recognised by the headquarters of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress. An odd misconception, or blind eye to historical truth on the part of these spokesmen, because this was precisely the position of the old militant *Daily Herald*. The heroic era of the *Daily Herald*, on the basis of which its original reputation was made and the love and loyalty of the working class was won, the era when it really was part of the history of the labour movement, was precisely the era when it fearlessly fought the official policy of the leadership of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress, and was denounced by the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress whose leadership sought by every means in their power to destroy it. Thus the true successor of the old *Daily Herald* is the *Daily Worker*.

The Daily Citizen and the Daily Herald

When the *Daily Herald* was launched in April 1912 (at first with some encouragement from Bowerman, then Secretary of the T.U.C., but this changed to hostility after its revolutionary character was revealed), and when in face of all the formidable obstacles and daily menace of disaster it did not collapse, the Trades Union Congress in October 1912 passed a resolution to support the establishment of a rival daily newspaper to represent the policy of the official labour movement, and to be entitled the *Daily Citizen*. The organisation of this, through a body called 'Labour Newspapers Limited', was entrusted to a young Fabian protégé of Ramsay MacDonald and darling of the Independent Labour Party, the Chairman of the University Socialist Federation, Clifford Allen. Recalling the battle

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of those days of the officially supported *Daily Citizen* against the *Daily Herald,* Clifford Allen wrote in 1925 (after the *Daily Citizen* had long ago failed and the *Daily Herald* had been swallowed by the Trades Union Congress):

> It is no exaggeration to say that the *Daily Herald* in its early days did more to hinder the successful launching of the first labour daily than any agent of capitalism or of the capitalist press. Its wrecking tactics, its unqualified abuse, and the serious effects of its unscrupulous agitation, when Bruce Glasier, Anderson, Henderson and MacDonald and others were raising the funds to establish the *Daily Citizen* can never be forgotten. . . . The scandal and abuse of the *Daily Herald*. . . .
>
> (Clifford Allen in the *Daily Herald,* February 6, 1925.)

Lesson of the Daily Citizen

Let the lesson of the *Daily Citizen* never be forgotten by those who seek to decry the role of the *Daily Worker,* because it lacks the official blessing of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress and cannot therefore in their view be regarded as a daily newspaper of the labour movement. In this battle, to all seeming, of David and Goliath, it was the *Daily Citizen,* backed with all the resources of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress, and therefore the assumed support of the millions of organised workers, which went down for the count and vanished without trace, so that its very memory is forgotten, and its ancient copies are scarcely even a collector's treasure. It was the *Daily Herald,* whose very existence was an abomination in the sight of all the respectables of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congresss, the organ that supported without fail every strike and struggle of the workers, the starveling whose one weapon was the love and devotion of the working class: it was the *Daily Herald* which won the battle and survived, even though its ultimate fate was also to be destroyed in the end by the megatheria of Transport House and Fleet Street.

1914 and Working Class Journalism

Already by March 1914 a Special Conference was convened by the T.U.C. and Labour Party to consider the ailing condition of the right-wing *Daily Citizen,* and the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

> This Conference hereby declares that the *Daily Citizen* as the official organ of the labour movement should be loyally supported by the workers. The delegates present pledge themselves to secure from their organisations a contribution equal to 1s. per member per year for three years to ensure the permanent success of the paper.

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In June 1914 a doleful communication from the Board of Directors of the *Daily Citizen* informed the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U.C. that 'many trade unions have not carried out the resolution in favour of a 1s. per member contribution'. Within a few weeks came the first world war. The *Daily Citizen,* after a few weeks of official pro-war orthodoxy, folded up. The weekly *Clarion* of Blatchford, which had enjoyed a circulation of 90,000 as a lively unorthodox propagandist of socialist ideas, also went pro-war, and its circulation fell to 10,000. The *Daily Herald* took the shock, and survived as a vigorous weekly, gradually clarifying its political line from initial confinement to support of the workers on the home front towards an increasingly open anti-war platform (with an admixture of pacifism), mobilised mass support for the Russian March revolution and the Bolshevik revolution, and was able to emerge after the war to a triumphant resurrection as a leading militant organ of the working class movement from 1919 to 1922.

The Old Revolutionary Daily Herald of 1912-1913

What was the character of the old original *Daily Herald* which thus aroused the ire and hatred, not only of the Liberal Government and of every organ of capitalism, but equally of all the respectable 'Lib-Lab' leaders of the Ramsay MacDonald type or reactionary upper trade union hierarchy? The paper, living from hand to mouth, and struggling for existence from day to day, openly fought on behalf of the working class against the capitalist class, not merely against capitalism in the abstract, but against the capitalist magnates and employers by name and against the toady type of trade union and labour leaders. There was a succession of editors; the last editor of this revolutionary period before Lansbury, and the main inspirer of the character of the paper during this period, was Charles Lapworth. Lapworth was a syndicalist, which in the confused ideology of those days was an expression of revolutionary intent. It will be recalled that Tom Mann, the most heroic figure of the British labour movement (if we yield Connolly to Ireland) was at that time the leader of the agitation for syndicalism or revolutionary industrial unionism: after the Communist Party was formed, Tom Mann joined the Communist Party, wrote his 'From Syndicalism to Communism' in *Labour Monthly* of October 1922, and died a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

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Revolutionary Agitation

This fighting class outlook moulded the character of the paper, at the same time as drawing in every stream of revolt from the most diverse sources. Hatred of the shams of reformist parliamentarism was reflected in the habitual use of the heading 'The House of Pretence' to cover reports of parliament. Under the heading 'The War That Really Matters' every strike, every sign of working class anger and revolt, every militant resolution from the rank and file was lovingly recorded and given unqualified support. When official quarters deprecated this support of every strike, the old *Daily Herald* replied: 'We have considered the matter. We have considered every phase of it, and we say: "Prepare your organisation and then strike". STRIKE AND STRIKE HARD.' Will Dyson, the greatest English cartoonist of the twentieth century (in fact, Australian in origin), compared with whose ferocious power even Low and the best have been drawing room entertainers, pilloried alike Big Business and its satellites, the kneeling circle of 'Labour Leaders At Their Devotions' around the sacred symbol of the Top Hat. G. K. Chesterton, the star feature journalist of the Government organ, the *Daily News,* created a sensation in Fleet Street when, although no socialist, he departed from that organ of capitalism to join the *Daily Herald.* It was then that he wrote his memorable poem on Fleet Street

> And all the truth they talk in hell,
> And all the lies they write

just as his best work dates from the moment of inspiration he won from the upsurge of the working class movement in that era, like his poems 'The Song of the Wheels', inspired by the great strikes, and 'The Secret People'. Lloyd George, questioned on a reference in the *Daily Herald,* replied: 'That paper is the limit'. So its publishing company, which had been forced into liquidation by a law case, was renamed The Limit Publishing Company. There was gaiety, as always, alongside all the hardship and suffering, in the militant movement in those days. The spirit of revolution was in the air—until the guillotine of the first world war came relentlessly down on a movement politically all too unprepared for the realities of the modern world and the socialist revolution.

The First Transformation of the Herald—the Transition to Lansbury

The blazing flame of the original revolutionary *Daily Herald* could not easily survive in the suffocating atmosphere of capitalism. The means of subsistence of its own best supporters were struck

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hard with deprivation from the bitterly fought struggles, the dockers' strike in 1912, the collections for the starving families in the Dublin lock-out in 1913, the big building lock-out in the beginning of 1914; the pennies to maintain the paper were not easy to come by, however devoted the support of the militant workers. George Lansbury, already then a foremost militant Labour Councillor and M.P. (who had originally learned his socialism as a member of the Marxist Social Democratic Federation), a Christian propagandist of socialism and indomitable fighter for the daily needs of the workers in the East End, and a national figure, had from the outset been associated with Ben Tillett and others in the Committee which founded the *Daily Herald*, and active in its counsels. His wider contacts with middle class and business friends who were able and willing to give financial support on a larger scale for progressive purposes, like the manufacturer Fels of Fels-Naphtha, and many others, came to the rescue of the paper. The ownership of the paper was now vested in the Limit Publishing Company, with three directors, Lansbury as Chairman, Lapworth the Editor, and Francis Meynell (now Sir Francis Meynell), who, according to the subsequent statement of Lapworth, was added as 'representing several anonymous rich friends of Mr. Lansbury' who had 'agreed to make good' the loss on the paper. In December 1913, at a meeting of the Board, Meynell proposed the replacement of Lapworth as Editor by Lansbury; Lapworth opposed: Lansbury as Chairman gave his casting vote in favour of the change. So Lansbury became Editor.

Against Class Hatred

Whatever may have been the detailed circumstances of the change, there is no doubt that it had a political significance. Lansbury had already publicly disagreed with the political approach of Lapworth in a letter published in the *Daily Herald* of October 2, 1912, expressing 'my strongest protest against your attack on Philip Snowden' (an article exposing Snowden as a traitor or potential traitor to be watched—the justification of which warning was amply proved two decades later). Lapworth, after his dismissal (formally, 'resignation'), in a letter of December 12, 1913, gave his version of the proceedings of the Board on December 2 and the answer he received when he asked for the reasons for removing him:

> Mr. Meynell replied: 'We are against the gospel of hatred you preach'. I pointed out that the paper stood for the class war without modification, and Mr. Lansbury interposed that 'it would continue to stand for the class war, but not class hatred and attacks on persons of another class'. . . . My

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> construction was that the paper was to be allowed to retain its 'kick', but that it was to have a feather bed tied round its foot. Both Mr. Meynell and Mr. Lansbury insisted that their complaint was against the tone and not the policy of the paper. Mr. Meynell said that almost every day his father or somebody else complained of something offensive. My reply was that the *Daily Herald* was not written for rich people, but by workers for workers, and so far the latter had not made manifest any objection to the tone.

This is of course a partisan account of the discussion from one side. This letter from the dismissed Editor to the *Daily Herald,* giving his version of the facts and expressing his protest against the dismissal, was (unlike Lansbury's protest published in the paper under the editorship of Lapworth) refused publication in the *Herald* and was published in the *New Age,* the left-wing weekly edited by A. R. Orage, on December 18, 1923.

Idealism and the Facts of Life

The details of this old unhappy affair are no longer important to present-day readers save for the light they throw on the problems of the working class press under capitalism. There is no reason to doubt that the *Herald* under Lapworth's fiery editorship would have probably gone out of existence for hard financial reasons. Lansbury rescued the *Herald* for nine years of valiant service to the working class and socialism. But there is also no doubt that henceforth during this phase the old note of combative class militancy was inextricably mingled and tempered and sweetened with the authentic note of Lansbury's idealist Christian pacifism; and that this slightly woolly combination (as shown later in his naïve peace mission to Hitler in 1937, when he publicly acclaimed Hitler as 'one of the greatest men of our time') was far more suitable to loosen the purse strings of philanthropic men of wealth whose hearts the style of Lapworth's organ could never touch. In the world of the capitalists their adage holds: 'Money talks'. Money's silence can also talk. Without any derogation of the passionate sincerity and self-sacrificing tireless devotion of Lansbury in the cause of the working class and socialism, representing a record equalled by few in the British labour movement, it can be said that it was this unique combination of his personality which was probably the key factor, not only in gathering a brilliant array of contributors around the old *Herald* during the years of his editorship, but in grappling with and meeting the hard material problems to enable the paper to survive and give such noble service to the cause of the militant working class and socialism during

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some of the most critical years of history, until the burden became too great also for him.

Proud Record of Lansbury's Herald

Those were great years of the *Herald* under Lansbury's editorship, both as a weekly during the war, and still more in its high tide of revival as a fighting daily newspaper from 1919 to 1922. The history of the *Herald* during those years is interwoven with the history of the British labour movement and of the international movement. Here was welcomed the Russian revolution, and under its auspices the great Albert Hall gatherings were massed in honour of the victorious Bolshevik revolution. Here were exposed the wars of intervention, with such revelations of damning official secret documents, that Churchill raged and fumed with impotent fury. Here on the day of the Versailles Treaty was published the most brilliant prophetic cartoon ever drawn, by Dyson: the picture of the Big Four emerging, and Clemenceau saying (as in fact he was reported to have said as they emerged): 'Curious! I seem to hear a child crying', and in the corner a tiny naked baby with around its head 'Class of 1940'. On the day of the foundation of the Communist Party the editorial of the *Daily Herald* wrote:

> Today the National Convention that is to found the Communist Party of Great Britain meets in London.
>
> The founding of such a party we count emphatically a gain to the movement in this country. It is not a new split. It is indeed a fusion. But it is more than this. It is the creation of an organisation for the expression in action of a definite and existent body of revolutionary thought.

Those were the days when the unity of the working class movement found living expression in the old *Daily Herald,* and under Lansbury's broad and hospitable umbrella spokesmen of all sections could come together to combine their efforts in the common cause.

Second Transformation of the Herald—Surrender to the T.U.C.

Those days were too good to last, after the ebb of the world revolutionary tide had set in, and the right-wing leadership had begun to insert its spikes of disruption in the once all-inclusive labour movement. The financial burden proved too heavy to be met, even after the price had been raised, and despite gifts from the miners (themselves hard hit by Black Friday) and the railwaymen. In the spring of 1922 Lansbury approached the Labour Party and T.U.C. for aid. In the autumn of 1922 the *Daily Herald* was taken over by the T.U.C., and Lansbury ceased to be Editor. For the next seven years

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the paper was the official organ of the right-wing leadership, and directly controlled by the General Council. Ended was the militant note. In place of Lansbury a star Northcliffe journalist from the *Daily Mail* stable, Hamilton Fyfe, was appointed Editor. In his hands the paper was suitably transformed and 'brightened' and purged of class struggle. The capitalist class disappeared from the editorial columns and became 'the Thoroughly Comfortable'. The financial columns tipped investors to put their money in the fascist Hungary of Horthy's White Terror:

FOREIGN LOANS COMING ALONG
BONDS WELL WORTH GOING FOR
By Our Financial Expert

The statement made by me on the 1st of the month that some good foreign loans were coming along has not had to wait long for verification.

Today there is the £1,000,000 Hungarian 7½ per cent Land Mortgage Bonds at 93, which will be quickly oversubscribed. . . . For mixing with other investments this bond seems well worth going in for.

(*Daily Herald*, January 5, 1926.)

Third Transformation of the Herald—Surrender to Odhams

Strangely enough, this transformation of the *Herald* into a 'bright' organ of the General Council and capitalism did not arouse the enthusiasm of the working class. Complaints and upbraiding of the trade union and labour membership for failing to support their official organ were ceaseless:

Millions of members of the Labour Party and members of trade unions have miserably failed to respond to the many appeals addressed to them by the General Council and the Labour Party Executive Committee.

(*Daily Herald*, August 24, 1923.)

By 1929 the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress, claiming the support of millions of organised workers, found it impossible to maintain a single daily newspaper. Negotiations were entered into with the millionaire press firm of Odhams for a take-over. In 1930 the already defiled body of the *Daily Herald* was handed over to Odhams Press (with a Conservative directorate), which by the agreement held 51 per cent of the shares, that is, real control, while the joint representation of the T.U.C. General Council on the Board was maintained, and the general policy was still to conform to official policy of the T.U.C. and Labour Party. Odhams spent £2 million on a lavish circulation boost on the familiar lines of the millionaire press. By this magic wave of the wand of big capital the circulation of one-quarter of a million on the preceding Saturday became one

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million on the Monday, and soon after two millions—thereby demonstrating in classic form the true mechanics of the modern capitalist press, that circulation is not a function of the supposed free choice by the consumers but of the volume of expenditure by big capital. The largest individual shareholder in Odhams at a later date was the multi-millionaire shipowner, Sir John Ellerman, who was also one of the largest shareholders in the *Daily Mirror*.

Fourth Transformation of the Herald—Surrender to King

The record of the decline and fall of what still passed under the name of the *Daily Herald* during the last thirty-four years since the handing over to Odhams is of little more interest than to trace the successive stages of degradation of a Hogarthian 'Harlot's Progress' without his art. The so-called 'business' control by Odhams was of course also a political control in the interests of capitalism and Toryism. Before the Press Commission, in the evidence published in 1948, the former Editor Francis Williams described how the commercial proprietors objected to his criticising the 'appeasement' policy of the Chamberlain Conservative Government because 'they felt it might drive away some advertising support'. He further stated that leading articles written by him or under his direction had passages cut out by the chairman of the commercial board of directors without consultation with him as editor. These clashes led to his resignation. In 1957 the T.U.C. handed over control on a 25-year licence to Odhams. When in 1961 the Odhams empire of pulp magazines was sold to Cecil King's *Daily Mirror* empire, King found to his disgust that he had acquired, along with the profitable magazines which he wanted, the *Daily Herald* which he regarded as a costly and unwanted liability. To put through the total deal he had had to pledge himself that he would keep the *Herald* going for seven years.

Sentence of Death in 1964

King spent the next few years trying to find a way out of this pledge. After some prolonged haggling on both sides, he finally closed a deal with the T.U.C. in January of this year, by which he pays them £75,000 cash for their 49 per cent shareholding to close down the *Herald* in September and start a new paper 'free' of links with the labour movement or socialism. The T.U.C. had originally demanded £100,000 as the price of shame, but finally closed for King's original offer of £75,000—or a sale of the readers at 1s. 1d. a head. The end had come at last fifty-two years after the original

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denunciation of the militant *Daily Herald* by the official right-wing Labour leadership. It is a measure of the vitality of that old militant *Daily Herald* that it took over half a century for capitalism and the official Labour leadership to strangle their hated enemy, stage by stage, to the final death.

The Miracle Lives On—The Daily Worker

But the miracle is not dead. In the very selfsame year of 1930 in which the body of the *Herald* was surrendered to the millionaire press combine of Odhams the voice of independent working class daily journalism was born anew in the *Daily Worker*. Lord Northcliffe had called the old militant *Daily Herald* and the incredible mystery of its survival in the capitalist press jungle 'the Miracle of Fleet Street'. But today the *Daily Worker* is a still greater Miracle of Fleet Street. For today the iron grip of capitalist press monopoly and concentration, when two or three multi-millionaires control the daily reading of seven-eighths of the population; when it is no longer the readers who pay for their papers, but are subsidised by the multi-millionaire combines to swallow the muck; when readers are sold by the million like gambler's chips across a gaming table; when a great newspaper with one and a half million readers can be extinguished in a night if a few multi-millionaire advertising magnates turn their thumbs down, and the bewildered readers suddenly find themselves handed over to a newspaper of opposite politics: today the barriers of that iron grip are more formidable and impregnable than ever they were in those days of the old *Daily Herald* and Lansbury.

A Working Class Saga

Further, the old *Daily Herald* through Lansbury's connections could still count on a few wealthy patrons and backers ('anonymous rich friends' in Lapworth's bitter phrase) to give larger donations to help meet losses, like the *New Statesman* in its early days or *Tribune*; and could obtain some all too inadequate advertising revenue from the bigger firms. The *Daily Worker* would be glad enough of all such help, but, like *Labour Monthly*, has no major financial backers or subsidies behind it to smooth its path, while a vicious public intimidation campaign was conducted in the millionare press by name against any major firm advertising in the *Daily Worker*. Yet in the face of all this the *Daily Worker* survives by the support of its readers, who are not wealthy. Its accounts are an open book. After a budget on a shoestring, to meet its trading loss it depends on its

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readers' Fighting Fund, whose collection each month is a saga of working class self-sacrifice and devotion. This is the real miracle of our time in Britain, greater even than the old 'Miracle of Fleet Street'. What the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress with all their millions have confessed themselves unable to do, the militant workers and socialists, with their Communist Party, have achieved and are continuing to achieve. The struggle is harsh, and may grow harsher; but it is worth every effort to carry forward until the good days when the mighty press and newspapers of this country will be finally wrested from the multi-millionaires into the hands of the working people.

R.P.D.

NEITHER SOCIALIST NOR DEMOCRATIC

Mr. Wilson on Taxation and 'Planning'

J. R. Campbell

MR. Harold Wilson's speech at Swansea on January 25 was the first sustained effort in his General Election campaign to outline the economic policy, which a Labour government would operate if it attained office. On some questions the policy was very vague, on others (particularly taxation policy) there was a reasonable degree of precision.

Basically Mr. Wilson's first principle coincides with that of Sir Alec Douglas Home and Mr. Reginald Maudling. Namely, that the British capitalist economy must produce more and, out of that extra production there will come the resources to finance educational development and a modest degree of other social reforms. Therefore there is no need for increased taxation of the rich. Mr. Wilson also wants a new type of planning organisation to supervise the process of increasing production but, when he comes to actual measures to be applied, his approach is little different from that of the Tories:

> We have been thinking in terms of a Ministry of Production, under a senior Minister to ensure that an effective national plan is worked out for production, exports, imports, capital investment and industrial training and technological research. What *Neddy* has begun this Ministry must carry through to completion, with effective powers for the job.

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The main question is, however, given a monopoly capitalist society, how to get the powerful privately owned firms (the monopolies and the near monopolies) to conform to the plan. The general answer, which Mr. Wilson gives, is that firms must be given tax inducements to persuade them to play their part. The main inducements will be tax reliefs when they export more, or when they undertake to produce types of goods at home which are at present bought from abroad, or when they are prepared to introduce automation on a large scale. The basis of this 'planning' is clear. The monopolies and near monopolies will not be prepared to co-operate with the Government on the present basis. They must be induced to co-operate by being given special tax exemptions—either in the form of increased investment allowances or some other form of subsidy or tax relief. Now clearly this form of inducement is likely to favour the go ahead firms at the expense of stick in the muds. In fact with certain exceptions, it is likely to favour the large firms—thereby increasing the degree of monopolisation in British industry.

Is this not equivalent to increasing the income of the large firms at the expense of the general body of taxpayers, one is tempted to ask? Wilson's reply is 'within company taxation, we should like to see a redistribution of the burden between the lazy and the slothful on the one hand, and the energetic and enterprising on the other, by the methods I have outlined'. Alas no such method has been outlined by Mr. Wilson in this speech or any other that we have seen. Those who conform to the Government's policy will be given subsidies in the form of tax reliefs. Those who do not will not get the subsidies, but it does not follow from this that it is they, and not the general body of taxpayers, who will be called to find the subsidies to the so-called 'go-aheads'. What is clear is that there will be inducements for firms able and willing to fall in with the Government's plans, and that the Government will help them to achieve a considerable increase in profits, most of which they will be allowed to retain.

With regard to profits in general, Mr. Wilson proposes to reintroduce the system, which existed previous to 1958, of taxing profits distributed as dividends at a higher rate than profits ploughed back into the companies to finance future expansion. This has led to some sham indignation in Stock Exchange quarters, though in fact this type of taxation is almost universal in the capitalist world. In fact its re-introduction in Britain may please some directorates, who want Government support in increasing the amount of profits ploughed back, not always for the purpose of extending their own

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plants, but for the purpose of buying shares in other firms. But however the ploughed back profits are used, they will, if the company is moderately successful, increase the value of the shares in the hands of shareholders. So the shareholders can sell these shares on the Stock Exchange and realise a capital gain. Or the company can make a bonus issue and give its shareholders an additional share for every one they now hold. Thus if a company limits dividends the value of its shares will increase and shareholders will be able to sell their shares and realise a capital gain. Now Mr. Wilson is in favour of a tax on capital gains and this is all to the good, though a great deal will depend on the rate at which the tax is levied. It is quite likely however, despite this tax, that most of the long term capital gains will be found to stick to the fingers of the shareholders.

There are two strange omissions from Mr. Wilson's tax policy, a tax on capital and a more effective system of death duties. It is remarkable that in spite of the apparent heavy burden of taxes on incomes, the distribution of accumulated wealth in Britain continues to be grossly unequal. Despite the heavy estate duties which have been imposed over a long period, 2 per cent of the population own over one-half of the private wealth of the country. The great fortunes are not being broken up. Fortunes are being distributed 'round the family' by gifts during the life-time of the head of that institution. When he dies only a tiny part of his fortune is left to be taken into account in assessing estate duties. With the growing accumulation of wealth the yield of estate duties should be growing greater every year. In fact it is virtually stagnant. There is probably no tax in any major capitalist country that is so brazenly evaded.

For a long time the Labour Party has played with the idea of a 'capital tax' or a 'wealth tax' that would be less easy to evade and which would break up the great fortunes. Such a tax finds no place in Mr. Wilson's list and there is every reason to believe that under the threat of a 'flight of capital' it has been abandoned. After all it is a bit inconsistent to 'plan' by inducing the monopolists, under the bribe of tax reliefs, to do what the Government wants them to do and then proceed to break up large fortunes by way of a 'wealth' tax or a 'capital' tax. Co-operation with the large firms in promoting a policy of economic growth precludes attacking the personal fortunes of those who control them. If the policy of stimulating capital investment is successful, then every year the portfolio of shares in the hands of the larger shareholders becomes more valuable. Their personal fortunes increase so that the accumulated wealth in the hands

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of 2 per cent of the people grows larger and the distribution of wealth between the classes grows more and more unequal. This is the logical outcome of giving the large capitalist firms more incentives to accumulate with a view to greatly increased profits.

Some years ago right-wing socialists in their anxiety to divorce socialism from nationalisation (of any type) coined the slogan 'Socialism is about equality' arguing that it was possible to achieve a greater degree of social and economic equality by taxation. Mr. Wilson's tax reliefs for willing monopolists is putting paid to that proposition. The new slogan should be 'Socialism is about increasing production under monopoly capitalism'. By stimulating capital development and capital accumulation it will increase the fortunes of the controllers of industry and intensify social inequality. We say that a capital tax or wealth tax would do no more than slow down this process. However, in the absence of such a tax, inequality in the distribution of personal wealth is bound to increase sharply.

We may count as a positive point that Mr. Wilson promised an 'attack on tax avoidance'. There is scope for this attack when it is realised that while the national income has increased more than threefold since before the war, the yield in surtax has not increased threefold, despite a rise in its rate. Firms are paying their executives more in goods and services—the personal payment of expensive education for their children, expensive insurance schemes and much else besides. If some of this can be stopped it will be of some limited use. There is, however, no redistributory element in Mr. Wilson's policy. The big firms (or those which are amenable to Government policy) will be induced to produce more, increase their profits and accumulate capital at a faster rate. This only serves to underline the basic socialist point that until the great privately owned industries are brought into national ownership and the fortunes of those who control them are cut off at their source, taxation at the best can only slow down the pace at which economic and social inequality grows and those in control of the means of producing and exchanging wealth will be in a strong position to keep ahead of the Inland Revenue in devising new methods of tax avoidance.

Mr. Wilson has got to reconcile his policy of giving inducements to the monopolists with his incomes policy, which aims at ensuring 'a planned growth of incomes'. Few trade unionists have any doubt of the ability of a government, provided the unions foolishly give it their consent, to restrict increases in wages *in the short run*, i.e. until the workers realise the inequities of this policy in a capitalist

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society. It is now quite evident, however, that neither the Tory Government nor the Federation of British Industries, nor anyone else, has yet explained how, having prevented wages from rising, they are going to prevent profits from rising. What they have said to the trade union officials is that if they co-operate in keeping wage increases from rising by more than 3½ per cent per year, here and now, and if as a result of this profits rise above a certain level in the future, then the Government will take some of these extra profits back by means of taxation. That is the only policy that the Tories and the F.B.I. have suggested. Its gross injustice is so evident that even the right wing devotees of an 'incomes policy' are refusing to accept it in this form because 'confidence trick' is written all over it.

In no visible way is Mr. Wilson's version of an 'incomes policy' different from that of Mr. Maudling. He has carefully refrained from telling us how he proposes to deal with profits as part of his incomes policy. He told the Swansea audience 'we have the right to ask for this (incomes) policy because we are willing to create the conditions in which it can be established—conditions applying to all incomes, not excluding rents'. This is not good enough. It is the kind of thing that the Government has been ladling out for the last two years. When it came to a show-down it was found to be a policy that restricted the wages and salaries leaving profits and prices control as a vague aspiration for the future. It is doubtful if Mr. Wilson has a policy basically different from this. So the whole policy based on the subsidisation of the monopolists can only increase their power to dominate industry and government. In all this there is neither a socialist nor a democratic strategy. All progressive elements in the Labour Party must force Mr. Wilson and the N.E.C. to think again.

FILMS : THE LION'S TALE

George Elvin

General Secretary, Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians.

UNTIL the last few weeks it was not generally realised how important a stake the Government held in the British film industry. Through the National Film Finance Corporation (established by the post-war Labour Government) it has financed, in whole or part, over half the British films made in the last fifteen years; through its control of British Lion Film Distribution it has maintained the only major distributor of British films outside the two

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big combines (Rank and Associated British); and through its ownership of Shepperton Studios it has provided the centre of production of a large number of the best (both artistically and revenue-earning) British films of recent years.

Now all this is gravely threatened because of the apparently doctrinaire approach of a Conservative Government determined to sell British Lion and Shepperton back to private ownership and their refusal to issue fresh capital to the National Film Finance Corporation, without which it cannot continue to give adequate help to film production. The total number of films assisted by the N.F.F.C. during its lifetime is 505 television, 149 short and 645 feature films, at a cost to the Exchequer of about £100,000 per annum, its average annual deficit. It seems to us a small price to pay for portraying British life on the screens of the world and keeping in employment the thousands of people concerned in their production. Compare this paltry sum with the £300 million received by the Government in entertainment tax from the cinemas, until its recent abolition.

British Lion, in addition to its services to independent British films, has been a most successful business enterprise since it came under its present ownership in 1955. To keep the company going, it received an advance from the N.F.F.C. of £569,000 which it has now repaid. From trading at a loss it gradually became profitable and last year made a profit of £1,195,829. The present five directors, whom the Government allowed to purchase a half share in the company in 1958 for £9,000, have now received what they picturesquely describe as a golden boot of £795,000—a tax free capital gain of about £150,000 per head. No wonder Sir Cyril Osborne (U. Louth) and other Members of Parliament of all parties criticise the Government for intending to sell such a profitable enterprise. The Government has only bought out the five shareholders in order to re-obtain complete ownership of the company and then resell it to private interests. The bids, as announced in the press, are now pouring in because the price asked for the company is only £1,590,000 which many assert is only about half its real value.

In the debate in the House of Commons on February 4, the Government maintained its determination to sell British Lion but conceded a few small points following the pressures from the Federation of Film Unions, the Federation of British Film Makers (representing independent film producers), Members of Parliament and others. Mr. Heath, Secretary of State for Industry, Trade and Regional Development, said:

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It was intended that the N.F.F.C. should hold a single special share in the company, with certain rights to it. These would include the right to veto its voluntary liquidation, the right to veto the sale of the undertaking, and the right to veto the repayment of any capital to shareholders or the disposal of its interests in the Shepperton studios except in specific circumstances which would be in the judgment of the special shareholder.

The corporation would also have the right to nominate a director to the board of the company, so that they and the Government would be fully apprised at all times and in contact with its affairs. These provisions would be permanently effective, and ensure that no future purchaser of British Lion shares could strip it of its assets or do anything but continue to operate it as a going concern. The purchaser would also have to give positive assurances to the corporation that British Lion would continue to provide the facilities to independent producers that it now gave, and would continue to maintain an independent position.

(*The Times*, February 5, 1964.)

Welcome as these small assurances are, they ignore the main issue of the importance of the Government remaining in the film industry as the only force strong enough to stand up to the two big combines, and the principle that in the national interest the Government should directly concern itself in films.

Maurice Edelman put this well during the debate when he said:

He did not believe that if the British Lion was in private hands it could secure the independence of independent film producers. The Government ought to be in the film industry. If British Lion was to be sold to purely commercial interests whose standards were simply those of profitability, the British film industry as one which was concerned with the film as an art medium, would certainly die, though it might linger on and even form part of an expanding medium of entertainment . . . it had potentially a great future, but the men who were concerned with the financial manipulations and combinations of the industry were throttling it.

(*The Times*, February 5, 1964.)

Douglas Jay emphasised these points when in winding up for the Parliamentary Labour Party, he asked:

Why Mr. Heath, if he admitted the case for some Government control, refused to go the whole way and retain the present Government ownership of the shares. It was the view of almost every school of thought in the industry that it was likely to be easier for British Lion to stand up as an independent force if there was substantial public ownership in it.

It is significant that the Cinematograph Films Council, an official body appointed to advise the Government on film matters, recommended at its last meeting that the Government should retain a substantial interest in British Lion. Membership of the Council comprises representatives of all sections of the film industry together

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with independent members. The Government has almost invariably taken the Council's advice when it suits them. Now they ignore it.

The Council also recommended the establishment of a third force of the same strength and completely independent of the two big combines. No Government pronouncement has yet been made on this recommendation. It is vital that action be taken as recommended in order to break the power of the duopolists and maintain independent production. The Federation of Film Unions and others who think like them wanted British Lion retained in Government hands to have ready-made the corner stone of this third outlet. The combines have three wings: production facilities, a distribution organisation and cinemas. A competitive State group would have had two of these through retention of Shepperton Studios and British Lion. The cinemas can be acquired by purchase of existing smaller circuits and independent cinemas, preferably on a voluntary negotiated basis, but if necessary, by compulsory acquisition. Where the circuits in a particular town have a monopoly of all the cinemas they would have to lease or sell one of their cinemas to the third group.

This must be done to produce an adequate outlet for British films. When the present crisis blew up there were eighteen films in the pipe line, some having been there for over a year, unable to get a booking because the two circuits give preference to their own product and American films delivered by American companies with whom they have arrangements to show their product. It is also alleged the best dates go to these films. There are, in any case, no dates left for other products despite the fact that British films on the whole are more successful in Britain. Last year, eight of the ten films which took least money at the box office were American. Yet they were shown in preference to British products. A third outlet, is therefore, of paramount importance to the survival of independent (i.e. non-combine) British production.

As the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians says in its new booklet, *Survival or Extinction? A Policy for British Films** 'It is a Government's duty to preserve a British film industry, just as it recognises the British theatre as part of British culture and the British ethos. Under its existing control the British film industry has failed the country. It is the Government's duty to intervene to the extent necessary to make it one of which the country as a whole, including those who seek to serve it, can justifiably be proud'.

*Available from 2, Soho Square, W.1, price 2s.

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CUBA: FIVE YEARS OF PROGRESS

Fidel Castro

[*At the Fifth Anniversary celebrations of the Cuban Revolution, Prime Minister Castro congratulated the people on their achievements in the face of great difficulties. We felt sure that our readers would welcome the opportunity to read his stirring speech and we are pleased to print an abridged English version.—Ed.*, L.M.]

FIVE years have passed since the victory of the Revolution and we certainly have every right to feel proud and to continue celebrating it forever.

When the Revolution assumed power, we knew that we had an immense and difficult task before us and it was also true that we, the leaders of the Revolution, and the people, had no experience in regard to this new task. It was not a military task; it was much more complex. It involved demolishing a whole unjust, antiquated, anachronistic social order, and building a new order for our people. The mode of production of our society had to be completely changed: a mode of production that had been entrenched for centuries, with all its traditions, its institutions, its procedures of education and organisation, had to be changed for an entirely new method for which we did not have the organisation, nor the appropriate ideas—the mental attitude appropriate to this new way of life. But we did know one thing: the victory of the Revolution meant the end of abuses, the end of privileges, and in time, the end of poverty and unemployment; in short, the end of the exploitation of our people.

What is the present like? Our present involves work, effort and difficulties. That we know, but nothing can make us change it for that past without hope. The only ones who long for the past are those who had everything then and never thought of the suffering and tears of the people. Let the exploiters shed tears today; let them and their masters try what they will to hinder the advance of the people; they will achieve nothing. Nothing will stop the victorious advance of our people.

It is not just victory over Batista and his clique. The people easily swept these enemies out of their way. It is victory over the U.S. imperialists: five years of resistance against the systematic aggression of U.S. imperialism. And if this victory means a great deal to us, it also means a great deal to the imperialists. This shows how much things have changed in the world. They have a great deal to learn from the example of the Cuban Revolution, which is teaching both reactionaries and revolutionaries. The revolutionaries receive an en-

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couraging lesson and the reactionaries a discouraging one. They must understand that there is an entirely new and different situation in the world, and in the midst of our well-earned pride and satisfaction at what the Cuban people have accomplished, we must keep in mind that it was only possible because of the new conditions in the world.

The Cuban Revolution is part of the very powerful movement of liberation of the oppressed peoples, of the exploited and colonised peoples. It is part of that very powerful world revolutionary movement that started with the historic revolution of the workers and peasants in the Soviet Union. And this powerful movement grew, until today it has the strength of all the countries of the socialist camp. We alone could not have resisted imperialism. Without this powerful movement we could not have resisted the blockades.

See how things have been changing in the course of the past five years. The imperialists would no longer think of disturbing the peaceful work of our country with an invasion such as that of Playa Giron; they would no longer think of occupying a portion of our territory to start a long, drawn-out war. They know the military might of our Revolution. Let us hope that our weapons will never have to be used. Let us hope that not one of those tanks, missile units or planes ever has to fight, that not one of our fighters has to die. This is our deepest wish. But we do not have these weapons for decoration, or because of a whim. If our people were not *forced* to live under constant danger, there would not be tens and tens of thousands of magnificent men handling complex weapons. These men would be in production. They would be working in the factories and fields, increasing production, raising the standard of living of our people, and the resources and the fuel spent on these weapons would be invested instead in means of production. That is why it is our wish that those weapons never have to be used. And the stronger our Revolution becomes, the greater the respect of our enemies will be. They know that the people of Cuba will fight. But not only this—they also know we do not stand alone. It would be a good thing if on this Fifth Anniversary of the Victory of the Revolution, the imperialists would sit down for a few minutes and think things over.

Some U.S. newspapers, among those that from time to time write objectively, are beginning to realise these things. See what the *New York Times* editorial says:

> The Cuban Revolution will be five years old tonight and the Castro régime is certainly strong, and possibly stronger than ever . . . all children are receiving an education, the majority are being well fed and well cared for, regardless of how poor their parents may be . . . the Negro and mulatto

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> population, from a quarter to a third of the total, is obtaining genuine equality. The heads of government are free from financial scandal. These aspects are new in the history of Cuba.

These objective words in which realities are acknowledged are really significant. The fact that they speak of genuine equality in our country has much to say to the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, wherever that equality does not exist. The fact that they recognise that all children are receiving an education is to recognise something in Cuba that does not exist to the same extent in any other Latin American country, not even in the United States itself.

How have we managed to do this, and under what conditions have we had to do it? There is no other country of America on which there weighs an economic blockade like the one maintained against us; there is no other country in America, whose economy is sabotaged the way the United States sabotages ours. Yet, nowhere has there been the change, the quick extraordinary advance that has taken place in Cuba. The imperialists speak of their Alliance for Progress, and continually complain that it does not progress. Why? The Alliance entails some fiscal reforms, some mild agrarian reforms and some other measures. It stipulates that politicians should not steal the people's money and that the bourgeoisie should not deposit their money in foreign banks. But at the same time, it presupposes the maintenance of conditions of imperialist exploitation.

Our economic situation today could not be better, in spite of the imperialists and their blockade. The merit of our successes is that they have been won in the struggle against imperialism, amidst the imperialist blockade. That is why the imperialists are trying to prevent visits to Cuba. They carry on a campaign; they publish that 'Castro abandons the agrarian reform'. Abandon the agrarian reform, when what we were doing was concluding the reform? Seventy per cent of the land formerly belonging to the imperialists and large local land owners today belongs to the people, to the nation, and thanks to this we can give an extraordinary impetus to agriculture. But, together with the people's farms, we have the small farm owners, who have the other 30 per cent of the land; they were freed from payment of rent by the Revolution, and constitute the great peasant mass allied to the Revolution.

When we talk about developing agriculture and doubling our sugar production with our installed industrial capacity, the imperialists tell the world: 'Cuba has abandoned her industrialisation programme'. Are we abandoning industrialisation, when we have thousands and thousands of young people in our technological schools?

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ELECTIONEE

THE LADI



It would be difficult to show any reason of propriety affecting th
position, who voted three weeks ago for a member of the Schoo
quiet manner: simply walking into a guarded room, taking from
nothing unfeminine in that; and the men who presume to think u
they cannot understand political questions, only prove themselves

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G HUMOUR

MMITTEE



the woman, being a separate householder, or in an independent
ould not vote for a member of Parliament next week in the same
paper and silently marking her choice at a side table. There is
omen can have no interest in the government of the State. or that
gant and supercilious bigots, and Tories at heart.

(*Illustrated London News*, 1885.)

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When hundreds of thousands of workers are studying, raising their educational level and acquiring a minimum technical knowledge? When what we are doing is creating the economic basis and human basis for our industrialisation? But, the development of industry in this first stage, under present conditions, is slower. Agriculture can be developed faster. But, are we abandoning industry? No. We are going to carry out the industrialisation of our country through the foreign exchange we get from sugar. We are going to develop the industries best suited to our conditions and specialise in certain branches of industry. What we are going to do is to take maximum advantage of our agricultural conditions: we are a food-producing country and a producer of foods that are much in demand. Certain consumer industries have developed so much in the world that there are twenty carloads pursuing each customer. But, there are no 2,000 pounds of meat or sugar pursuing each consumer, and our products command a very good price.

We have received exceptional aid, of course, from our brothers of the socialist camp: sincere and honest aid. But we have also received unexpected aid from the imperialists. It has not been conscious aid, do not imagine that. They helped involuntarily with their aggressive measures, such as depriving us of our sugar quota in order to ruin us. This measure boomeranged against them. What happened when they deprived us of our quota? Cuba needed new markets, so the Soviet Union and the whole socialist camp decided to buy our sugar. Of course, even before, Cuba had already sold one million tons to the Soviet Union by agreement. But when our quota was taken away, then they offered to buy all the sugar the United States did not buy. So the imperialists turned to the world market. At that time the world market price was low and they tried to benefit by it. But what happened? After a few years sugar prices began to rise so that last year the imperialists had to spend 400 million dollars more than if they had bought our sugar, and it will be even more this year.

The imperialists have harmed many nations through their policy against Cuba. What is more absurd, they have harmed those that are their allies. For such countries as Norway, Britain, France, Spain, Japan and others, receive large incomes from merchant shipping and using Cuba as a pretext, the imperialists are trying to replace the shipping lines of these countries by their own ships in trade between countries and the United States. The main difficulty regarding the sale of U.S. wheat to the Soviet Union has been that the U.S. government has tried to protect its shipping companies.

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The United States is trying to isolate the socialist camp economically; it is trying to isolate the People's Republic of China, to isolate Cuba. That is, they are trying to isolate over one thousand million people. But other capitalist countries do buy and sell to the socialist camp and while the gold reserves of different capitalist countries are increasing and their industry is developing, U.S. gold reserves are decreasing. The most serious headache they suffer today is the continuous decline in their gold reserves. They are putting a noose around their own neck with their policy. And are we starving? No. Our economy is improving. When the Revolution came to power there was less than 70 million dollars in the nation's reserves of foreign exchange. Our reserves at present are more than 100 million dollars in foreign exchange.

What will the future be like, as the organisation and the experience that we are acquiring are put into action; as we improve the quality of our work and learn how to apply technology to production? We have already ended old methods in politics, and now we are going to end old methods in agriculture. A man with a hoe is a prehistoric man as far as production is concerned. A man with a scythe can produce for himself and his family and perhaps for a few more. A man with a modern combine can produce meat for four or five hundred persons, he can produce milk for hundreds and he can produce much more sugar. We have to eradicate our pre-historic and primitive methods of production. We have to apply technology to all our agriculture, and to our industry as much as possible, because that will increase production per man and per hour and will raise the standard of living of our people. Fortunately, today the Revolution cannot only make promises, it can demonstrate deeds. We said right after the hurricane, which caused so much damage, that the levels of supply would be re-established by December 15. This has been done and at the close of the year, there have been incomparably more consumer products than in previous years.

What country in Latin America can present an economic situation like this? Most of the Latin American countries are in a tremendous period of inflation, which has no apparent solution, whilst Cuba is beginning to move in the opposite direction. Its reserves are increasing and inflation is being fought. What does it mean for us to have more reserves? If this were a bourgeois and capitalist country, it would mean that this wealth would turn into Cadillacs, into trips to Miami or Paris. But under socialism they are not going to be invested in luxuries: they are going to be invested in factories,

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in raw materials and in consumer goods for the people, because we never forget the needs of the people; the people who have the right—and Cuba's conditions allow it—to receive the fruit of their efforts. This is the real picture of Cuba, not that presented by the imperialist news agencies. This is the real Cuba that is confident in her future, the Cuba that desires a future of peace.

What are the perspectives of our people? What has the President of the United States said in these last few days?

> The American people and their government have set the strengthening of peace as their highest objective in the New Year. I myself am totally committed to attaining better understanding among peoples everywhere: peace on earth, good will to men, must not be a mere illusion. We can convert it into reality.

This is certainly a declaration of peace. Yet we have our reserves. Johnson says we must learn to live together in peace, but only a few days ago, on the eve of December 24, C.I.A. agents criminally shed Cuban blood—C.I.A. agents coming from and operating from Florida. That was the Christmas gift from the United States to the Cuban people: the blood of young Cubans. Such violations of international law are no way to advocate peace.

Our country wants to live in peace and can live in peace with all other countries. We have but one task: to make our country advance. Our trade is open to all countries alike. We exclude no-one. We trade with all sister countries of the socialist camp, and we are willing to trade under conditions of mutual benefit with all capitalist countries, even the United States. But it will have to be on the basis of the strictest and fullest respect for our sovereignty and our economic, social and political system. We will never make ideological concessions, and we will maintain an unyielding Marxist-Leninist position. This is no obstacle to our living in peace. It would be absurd for us to tell the people of the United States that if they want to trade and have good relations with us, they must give up their bourgeois philosophy. That would be so ridiculous that no-one would think of it. Well then, neither should they tell us these things. Who are they to issue laws within the border of another country? Our right, just as that of any country of Latin America, is and always must be to choose the type of government that we deem suitable.

Each country in Latin America should know what its interests are, but it is good to warn the nations and governments of Latin America that they have a lot to thank Cuba and the Revolution for, because if today many governments are not treated as dogs by U.S. imperialism—although every once in a while it boots off some

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government in Latin America—it is due to the Cuban Revolution. If today they hope to demand better prices from the imperialists for their products, if they have the hope that they will lend them some money, it is due to the Cuban Revolution. If the Cuban Revolution should be crushed by the imperialists today, on the following day the imperialists would destroy the economy and interests of all the nations of Latin America. The governments of Latin America must understand that to the same extent they help the imperialists against Cuba, they dig their own grave, and that the day the Cuban Revolution ceases to exist, the imperialists' fear ends, and then, goodbye to the few pennies they are now sending down for the construction of a road or a school or a hospital. That is why it is foolish to play their game. Several governments in Latin America that follow a policy more in line with the sentiments of their people, have maintained a position of resistance against imperialist pressures. We know that the people of Venezuela are heroic, fighting and persevering. Why are the Venezuelan people rebelling against the imperialists? Because they are being plundered, because Venezuela could be the richest country in the world with the highest standard of living for the people, with the oil deposits it has. Who is depriving them of all that? The imperialists, the military caste, grafting politicians. the reactionary bourgeoisie, the land owners, the large merchants in the country. That is the reason for the rebellion.

We have no right to intervene in their internal affairs, but neither have the imperialists the right to intervene and send weapons to murder Venezuelan patriots. We have no right to send arms to Guatemala or any other country, but neither have the imperialists the right to be sending arms and to do what they are doing in countries like Vietnam, where there are 15,000 American soldiers bombing the Vietnamese people. Let not a single nation be excluded from the right to peace! We can live in perfect and absolute peace with any country or government in Latin America, and even with the United States, regardless of the social system existing in those countries, on the basis of a policy of principles, of unlimited respect for the sovereignty of all countries, if every country does the same. We will never spare our efforts in the struggle for peace. Our soil is rich. Our people are intelligent and enthusiastic. Our citizens are becoming more and more skilled. We have friends. Our future is good. Let the imperialists know—since they sometimes believe we are drowning and want to be pulled out of the hole—that it is not we, but they, who are in the hole. They have a million problems that

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we have already solved. We can advance with a planned economy that develops vigorously. We can build the future we want.

The Cuban Revolution is consolidated; it is no longer the product of enthusiasm only. It is the product of consciousness, of understanding, of the experience that a whole nation has been acquiring. It has arisen at a moment in the history of mankind when the peoples are freeing themselves; when the peoples that were subjugated for centuries in Africa, Asia and Latin America have realised that they have the right, and, above all, they have the opportunity to be independent, to be free, to cease being vassals of the exploiters. It is the Revolution that has stirred the hopes and encouraged hundreds of millions of oppressed people. It will be a beacon, a torch in the history of our country; it will be an inspiration for coming generations. Every generation will do its part. We have seen how the present Soviet generation has been able to conquer outer space, while to the previous generation fell the glory of the Revolution, of laying the basis for the present possibilities. What will the descendants of the Cubans of today do? Perhaps our imagination cannot stretch so far. But we are quite aware that we are preparing the road to that future, and that along that path which we are building with our sweat, our blood, our enthusiasm, will march the future generations.

THE PRESS IN ELECTION YEAR

Allen Hutt*

THIS crucial election year of 1964 finds a major part of the propaganda apparatus of the Tory Party in better shape for battle than it has ever been. I refer, of course, to the ever-growing monopolisation of the Press and more particularly to the effects of last year's unprecedented slaughter of substantial provincial evening papers. I suspect that it is not widely realised just how significant this whole operation has been. Most people have no doubt grasped the much-publicised fact that, outside the metropolis, competing second evening papers have now vanished from every city in this country, with the single and special exception of Glasgow. But what does this mean, concretely, in terms of the capitalist interests involved?

It has not, in fact, meant a major accretion of strength to the Big Five national Press groupings, only two of whom (Rothermere and Thomson) were at all involved; what it has done is to add greatly to

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the power of the 'independent' morning-evening publishers who dominate the local Press in some of our biggest, and politically most important, cities. 'Independence', of course, simply means not being part of a national group but representing, broadly, local capital, albeit in very substantial fashion. Consider the cases of Birmingham (*Post, Evening Mail, Sunday Mercury*), Leeds (*Yorkshire Post, Evening Post*), Liverpool (*Daily Post, Echo*), Manchester (*The Guardian, Evening News*), Bristol (*Western Daily Press, Evening Post*), Nottingham (*Guardian Journal, Evening Post*).

With the exception of the sour right-wing Liberalism of *The Guardian* (if that really is an exception) all these city Press units are traditionally and solidly Tory. The *Post-Mail* outfit has been the Tory voice in Brum from Joe Chamberlain's time; the actual title of the Leeds concern is the Yorkshire Conservative Newspaper Co. Ltd. What has happened now is that the position of the evening paper in each case has been greatly strengthened by its new-found monopoly. First figures show that the *Yorkshire Evening Post* has risen from around 236,000 a day to over 320,000, the *Manchester Evening News* from 323,000 to 477,000, the *Birmingham Evening Mail* from something over 300,000 to 404,000.

Figures like this represent a saturation coverage, in terms of population, whose electioneering significance requires no labouring. While the National Press and television deals with national issues, those local issues which can often tilt a marginal vote one way or the other are meat and drink to the big local papers; and the mass-sale local evenings are in the best position to campaign on such issues. Hence the great importance of the 'rationalisation' closures of 1963; if they were not put through with the election in mind then the coincidence is singularly fortunate for the Tory Party.

What I call the 'city units' are in any event deeply committed to the Establishment; they are heavily capitalised, highly profitable, commercial concerns whose cause is naturally the cause of Tory 'affluence'. Such is their wealth that within recent years almost all of them have handed out 100 per cent share bonuses.

Birmingham is an interesting example. The profitability of the *Post-Mail* concern is of a formidable order. The latest figure is £585,000 after allowing £110,000 for the costs of closing down the *Evening Despatch;* we have noted above the immediate boost in the *Mail's* circulation, and advertising is climbing likewise. The new *Post-Mail* offices and plant to be completed next year in Birmingham's fabulous new city centre will be a European showpiece costing

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£7 million and including what is said to be the biggest single rotary press order ever placed in this country. Around the morning-evening-Sunday core of the concern there is a fringe of 11 prosperous local weeklies, running from Walsall to Sutton Coldfield and controlled by the *Post-Mail* subsidiary, the West Midlands Press. And since 52 per cent of *Post-Mail* equity is in the hands of Lord Iliffe and his family there is a link with the Iliffe newspaper interests in Coventry and Cambridge (two evenings, nine weeklies). There are also television connections, with ATV and Granada, just strengthened by the nomination to the ATV Board of the *Post-Mail*'s astute accountant-chairman Sir Eric Clayson.

I have said that only two of the Big Five national groups were involved in the 1963 evening paper clean-up. The Rothermere Group's closure of its second evening in Leicester, the *Mail,* was the least spectacular of the six slayings. It had long been expected; the group's principal Leicester evening, the *Mercury,* was built up and the *Mail* quietly run down to the point at which its death was comparatively painless. Nevertheless it has clearly represented an important strengthening of the group in this Midland city; a subsequent announcement indicated that the *Mercury* is to have a brand-new building and plant, the site alone costing £130,000. At the same time the Rothermere Group bought up the only substantial outside interest in its string of a dozen provincial dailies—the 49 per cent holding of Provincial Newspapers Ltd. in Hull and Grimsby Newspapers, the Rothermere subsidiary publishing the *Hull Daily Mail* and the *Grimsby Evening Telegraph.* The price paid was reputed to be around £1 million.

This Rothermere-Provincial deal preceded the emergence of Provincial as the central factor in the Edinburgh and Leeds evening paper closures. Provincial is the principal subsidiary of United Newspapers; the United/Provincial group in 1963 embraced four evenings (Edinburgh, Leeds, Preston, Northampton) and 23 weeklies, with chairman Harold C. Drayton's parallel chairmanship of Argus Press providing a link with a further 11 weeklies and 23 periodicals. Chairman Drayton is a magnate of some mystery, not unfairly labelled 'the City financier'. Press ownership is but one of his many interests, which cover banking, investment, insurance, transport, gold mining (South and West Africa), property. The true tycoon of our times, in short. A list—known to be incomplete—shows him as a director of 34 companies, chairman of 25; among the last is the remarkable British Electric Traction Ltd., with its 22

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subsidiaries, 35 associates and a fat slice in Associated Rediffusion. He is the patron of Mr. Angus Ogilvy, husband of Princess Alexandra and has him as a fellow-director in many of his companies.

What Mr. Drayton did on the closure front was to negotiate most successfully, from his point of view, both from a position of strength and from a position of weakness. His position of strength was in Edinburgh, where his *Evening News* had three times the circulation of Thomson's *Dispatch*. His position of weakness was in Leeds, where his *Yorkshire Evening News* ran a very poor second to the *Evening Post*. So in Edinburgh he drove a hard barter bargain with Thomson, surrendering his *Evening News* (enabling Thomson promptly to merge the *Dispatch* with it) only for the entire Thomson concern at Sheffield—the morning *Telegraph* and the evening *Star*, newly-equipped and not least of the profitable Thomson properties. In Leeds he sold out to the *Post* interests for £455,000—in shares in the Yorkshire Conservative Newspaper Co.; thus he unloaded a declining and loss-laden paper, while retaining its tangible assets like a valuable central Leeds site, in return for a significant 20 per cent holding in the equity of his former competitor.

We may well find that speculative big capital of the Drayton kind is interested in developing its Press influence, alike from the standpoint of propaganda and profit. The line that such development will follow will continue the rationalisation and strengthening of the key provincial dailies that the 1963 evening paper closures so notably forwarded. The United/Provincial Group may expand and more closely approach the position of the biggest purely provincial group, the nine-daily, 52-weekly Westminster Press, controlled by the Pearson family interests (Lord Cowdray). The Pearson interests also control the specialised *Financial Times* group; and Lord Cowdray is the brother-in-law of Tory Party chairman Lord Blakenham.

What I have tried to show here is the way in which the Tory Press on the ground—the big local, or as they themselves often say, regional Press—has been streamlined for the struggle. It is a factor with which the labour movement has to reckon; for, after all, what truly independent paper has it got at its disposal save the *Daily Worker*? The moral there surely needs no drawing.

Of course, everything described in this article has taken place against the background of the strength of monopoly in the national Press; seven out of every eight national mornings still come from three men—Northcliffe's nephews Rothermere and Cecil Harmsworth King, and the ineffable Beaverbrook. Mr. King's International

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Publishing Corporation (the extension of the Mirror Group) with its 85 subsidiaries and ten associates, continues to be the largest Press concern in the capitalist world.

As a footnote I observe that Mr. King has finally achieved his aim of buying the T.U.C. out of its last, national connection with the *Daily Herald*—for £75,000—so that, after the election, a once-historic newspaper title will vanish and Mr. King's *Sun* will rise. The new paper, says Mr. Hugh Cudlipp, I.P.C. editorial director, will be 'free of political and industrial ties' (we have heard that one before) yet will be 'radical' and thus 'help to correct the present political imbalance of the British Press'. Will it? The King-Cudlipp 'radicalism' is an odd and subjective phenomenon. Years ago the *Daily Mirror* dropped its masthead slogan 'Forward with the People'; and as the *Observer* (November 1, 1959) commented 'whenever circulation has been in straight conflict with ideals, circulation has won. . . . Perhaps "Forward with the Shareholders" would have been a more durable slogan'.

THE COURTS AND THE TRADE UNIONS

D. N. Pritt, Q.C.

IN January 1964, the judiciary struck one more blow at the trade unions. In the case of Rookes v. Barnard, the House of Lords laid down that if employees threaten their employer that they will srtike in breach of contract unless he dismisses a non-union worker, and the employer does then dismiss the man, the latter can sue those employees for the 'tort' (civil wrong) of 'intimidation', under which, if A threatens B that he will commit some unlawful act against B unless B dismisses C from his employment, and B then does dismiss C, C can sue A for damages. The law as to this 'tort' has always been pretty vague and indefinite, but until this decision no English Court had ever held that a threat to break a contract was a threat of an 'unlawful' act for the purposes of 'intimidation'; and the House of Lords decision is extremely important and damaging because the judges went on to hold, by a rather complicated bit of reasoning, that the Trade Disputes Act, 1906, which was always thought to bar actions in cases of this kind, did not bar this claim.

A lawyer who studies the judgments in the case (forty-four pages

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of foolscap) can see that they have some plausible logic, even if they do not read nearly as convincingly as those of the Court of Appeal, which had decided the other way. But the real lessons to be drawn from the case for all of us, including lawyers, turn on the position of the judges—part of the establishment, of the ruling-class—against the trade unions and their members, part of the working class, and on the proper understanding of the particular class-war front which covers the long struggle between labour and capital in the courts and in parliament.

The story viewed historically, is a text-book for Marxists. It starts a few centuries ago with a common law of feudal origin, applied by ruling-class judges in the interest of employers, and making every trade union activity criminal. The next stage was that working-class pressure, effective even before any appreciable political voting power had been conceded, won from parliament one statutory concession after another, each of which made trade unions a little less illegal. Then the employers of course counter-attacked, in three main fashions. The first was to get the statutes drawn as obscurely and ambiguously as possible, so that the workers and their unions were left in the greatest uncertainty as to what they could or could not lawfully do—a manoeuvre which, particularly when the magistrates were prepared to decide almost any question against the workers, in effect prevented all sorts of actions which parliament had really meant to legalise. The second course was to get parliament to pass further Acts, generally soon after the remedial measure won by the workers, but sometimes even at the same moment, which would operate to cancel out the gains of the workers. And the third course was to rely—seldom in vain—on the courts to interpret both the common law and the statutes in ways, often very unexpected ways, that helped the employers against the workers.

The lessons can be carried further. It is probably true that judges do not consciously and deliberately twist the law to defeat the workers; but they look at the problem through the spectacles of their up-bringing and their environment, which conditions them to a dislike of strikes and of trade unions. As Beatrice and Sidney Webb put it, just after the Taff Vale judgment to which I will refer later:

> A clear majority of our judges evidently believe, quite honestly, that trade unionism—meaning the enforcement of common rules on a whole trade—is anomalous, objectionable, detrimental to English industry, and even a wicked infringement of individual liberty, which Parliament has been foolishly persuaded to take out of the category of crimes. Their lack of economic training and their ignorance of economic science is responsible.

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These judges, like the vast majority of their class-contemporaries, believe quite simply in the sacred freedom of odd individual workers to injure their class by refusing to join its organisations designed to advance the interests of their class (although they would not concede to the workers the right to refuse to put on a uniform and kill other workers in order to advance the interests of the ruling class). And they give an illuminating picture of the effects of their environment by talking of the interests of 'the public' being injured by strikes without realising that the public consists of perhaps 75 per cent of workers. They attach, too, great importance to the 'sanctity of contract', but do not see, for the most part, that the contracts in question have been 'freely' entered into by workers whose bargaining power is infinitely less than that of the other contracting party. And they can hardly be expected to grasp that the right to strike—however distressing it may be to strike—is at least as important to workers as the right to go to war may be to an oppressed state.

It must be noticed that the system of 'case law', under which new law is made by the courts in decisions which in theory do no more than interpret the law, in fact makes it easier to extend the law, bit by bit, against the workers than it would be in a more rigid system of law. In Rookes v. Barnard, for example, it was easy for the House of Lords to extend the scope for the tort of intimidation; and all the time, of course, the up-bringing and the environment of the judges inclined them to make the extension.

It is not after all surprising that the courts have delivered so many blows against the trade unions by their interpretation of the statutes and of the common law. The names of the cases read like battle-honours inscribed on the regimental standards of the class war—Tolpuddle, Duffield, Rowlands, Taff Vale, Osborne, Bonsor, and now Rookes v. Barnard. But in these days we have the encouraging new feature that the weapon of legislation can be directly invoked at times by the working-class to reverse anti-trade union decisions of the courts. The most striking example—with its lessons for 1964—was the Taff Vale decision in 1901, where the House of Lords held that a railway company which had lost money as a result of a strike could sue the trade union involved and recover damages. This astonishing decision led the trade unions and the Labour Party to organise vigorous propaganda for the reversal of the decision by legislation, which actually helped in the General Election of 1906 to sweep the Tory Party into a humiliating defeat—and at the same time extracted from many parliamentary candidates, including even

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some Tories, pledges to reverse the decision. When the Liberal government was formed in 1905, it found the pressure so strong that it had to drop the relatively mild measure which it had intended to introduce and to accept in its place a much stronger one fostered by Keir Hardie; and this passed easily. And it is noticeable that in 1927, when the Baldwin government wreaked its vengeance after the General Strike (in the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act, 1927) it did not venture to repeal the 1906 Act, but only nibbled at its corners.

The trade union movement won its second major victory in the field of legislation in 1945, when it repealed the 1927 Act; but the Act did not go beyond the bare repeal, and left all the old anomalies and uncertainties unremedied—a sadly missed opportunity. In the eighteen years since 1946,* all that has happened is the shock of several unfavourable decisions, of which the worst is of course Rookes v. Barnard. It is plain that these must be remedied; counter-agitation must be swift, united, vigorous, and uncompromising; it has indeed begun. There should be resolutions at trade union conferences, every possible activity by the T.U.C. and pledges from parliamentary candidates, so that the next government will have no option but to legislate in the strongest terms, not just to correct the recent decisions but also to get rid of all the past uncertainties and restrictions. Opportunities must not be missed again.

Much has already been written as to how far the bad effects of the Rookes v. Barnard decision may be carried; it is not easy yet to say how far they may be carried; all that is quite certain is that at their very least they call for the strong counter-action mentioned.

*" The Law versus the Trade Unions " by D. N. Pritt and Richard Freeman (Publishers, Lawrence and Wishart, 1958).

LABOUR MONTHLY FORTY YEARS AGO

Marxism is to the Western world a book closed with seven seals. How, then, shall they understand Leninism which carries Marxism a whole age forward? If they have not known the merciless social self-analysis which is Marxism to prepare their minds, how shall they understand that consequent positive power and certainty of action which is Leninism? . . . But the workers must understand, or perish. They are already groping their way towards an understanding under the hard pressure of events. But there can be no complete understanding without theory.

(From 'Notes of the Month', *Labour Monthly*, March 1924.)

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REFLECTIONS ON EAST AFRICA

Jack Woddis

THE recent events in East Africa were a surprise to everyone. There are, of course, those who are only too ready with their explanations and slick slogans. Sir Alec Douglas-Home, for example, has rushed in blethering about a 'communist plot'. This nonsense has been well and truly punctured by those in a better position to know what actually happened. Jomo Kenyatta, Oginga Odinga (Kenya's Minister for Home Affairs), Achieng Oneko (Kenya's Minister of Information), Julius Nyerere and Oscar Kambona (Tanganyika's Minister for External Affairs and Defence), have all discounted this cold-war lie and condemned those spreading it. The Governments of Kenya and Tanganyika both issued official statements along the same lines. Oginga Odinga has stressed that:

> The imperialist Press, especially the British Press, has attempted to place the whole responsibility on the Communists and those they consider to be Communist sympathisers. I strongly disagree with this claim, by which the British are trying to avoid responsibility for what took place in Zanzibar. It was the British who encouraged unjust policies in Zanzibar which were intended to make the minority rule over the majority. . . . The British imperialists, knowing that their underhand work had been exposed, tried to find scapegoats in the form of Communists and people like myself. . . . With regard to the events in Tanganyika and Uganda, we in Kenya should take these as a serious warning. British personnel employed in responsible places by these Governments failed to train Africans so that they could fill these places. Instead they used their privileged positions to suppress the Africans below them, thereby creating an explosive situation.

These wise and justified remarks from one whose immense popularity and prestige in Kenya makes him a constant target of attack from Tories and the capitalist Press in Britain, need to be taken to heart by all the national leaders in Africa's new States.

The existence today of thirty-four independent states is the creation of the African masses, who fought and sacrificed over several decades in order that their countries might be free. The African people did not struggle solely to have African Governments, African representation at the United Nations, a national flag and national anthem. Nor did they suffer in order that British officials could still occupy key positions throughout the State apparatus. Still less was the goal of independence intended to mean for them that African Ministers and Members of Parliament would have privileged remuneration while the workers and peasants would continue to live in poverty, often jobless and landless.

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Kwame Nkrumah was quite right to warn the African Heads of State at last May's Addis Ababa conference: 'If, therefore, now that we are independent, we allow the same conditions to exist that existed in colonial days, all the resentment that overthrew colonialism will be mobilised against us'. The last four months have demonstrated the correctness of that warning. In Congo (Brazzaville), following a three-day general strike, accompanied by mass demonstrations in the capital when the workers tore down the prison gates and released the political prisoners, the puppet 'Abbe' Youlou and his government had to resign. In Cotonu, the capital of Dahoney, a four-day general strike and mass demonstrations by the workers at the call of their unions, caused a change of government. In Senegal, 50,000 people demonstrated against the government in protest against the killing by torture of one of the national leaders. And when the funeral took place, 50,000 again turned out and marched in the procession. In Congo (Leopoldville), strikes and demonstrations were followed by the arrests of trade union leaders, the dissolution of Parliament, the banning of the activities of Lumumba's MNC Party and Gizenga's African Solidarity Party, and the forcing of a number of M.P.s to flee the country; and now, armed units of the people are in action in several provinces against the American-backed Adoula Government. In Nigeria, a new party, the Socialist Workers and Farmers Party, has emerged as a challenge to the older-established parties who have made their country a haven for neo-colonialism; and last October, over 200,000 workers took part in a three-day strike for higher pay—the biggest and most united workers' action there since the days of struggle against British rule.

All these actions, irrespective of whether they were successful or not, reflect the growing anger and determination of the African people. Some African Governments, outstandingly those of Ghana and Algeria, are moving with their times, sincerely and energetically tackling the problems bequeathed to them by colonialism, and overcoming the new manoeuvres and plots of the imperialists. Such Governments have the overwhelming support of their peoples.

But there are other countries in Africa in which the Governments are either too hesitant or are downright collaborators of imperialism. Such governments are being jogged and challenged by the people; and in some cases, even overthrown. The whole pattern of neo-colonialism is increasingly coming under attack. Any hopes the imperialists may have had of the people being content solely with the status of independence, leaving imperialist cadres to continue

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their activities in the new States, and allowing the foreign monopolies to continue their ruthless exploitation, are doomed to failure.

The governments in Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda cannot be put in the category of those who have made themselves the willing instruments of neo-colonialism. They are popular governments, based on mass support, and placed in power by the people's struggle for independence. They face immense problems—extreme poverty, widespread illiteracy, lack of trained personnel, mass unemployment —to all of which are sometimes added tribal conflicts. On top of it all they have to contend with the intrigues of imperialism. These governments and their leaders will have every sympathy and understanding from their people in tackling these difficult tasks.

But such immense problems can only be overcome if these national leaders put the interests of the masses first, and if they keep the edge of their effort directed against imperialism. The events in East Africa—mutinies or soldiers' strikes, call them what you will—should, as Oginga Odinga has said, be taken by the national leaders 'as a serious warning'. The people want to see a new life. They know it cannot be achieved in a single day. But they want their governments to pursue a course which day by day is visibly yielding results. And they want their countries fully under African control.

An indication of the seriousness of the problems and of the temper of the people is the events which took place in Kenya during the very week of the recent crisis, as described in the East Africa fortnightly, *Reporter*, in its issue of January 31. The Kenya Cabinet

> was in urgent conclave, discussing ways to allay the rumbles of discontent from the country's unemployed. . . . Into Nairobi streamed reports of disgruntled forest-fighters who were still waiting for the Government to provide them with land or with jobs. . . . Meetings organised by the Kenya National Aid and Welfare Organisation . . . called on the Government to devote more time and money to providing more jobs. . . . In Nairobi, a crowd of 500 demonstrated outside Parliament Building demanding to see the Minister for Labour, Mr. Mwendwa, and asking for work of any kind—even if it would earn them 'only a few shillings a month'. Shouted one demonstrator: 'This is an uhuru Government. Those M.P.s with expensive cars should sell them and distribute the money to the poor'. . . . Across the way . . . 100 blind people demanded that a commission should look into their problems, and that the older folk among them should be granted Government allowances. From another union came an appeal to the Government to make it compulsory for employers (including Government departments) to take unemployed disabled people on to their staffs.

Summing up the lesson of these actions, the deputy general secretary

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of the Kenya Federation of Labour declared: 'The people are desperate. The demonstrators are expressing the feelings of thousands and thousands of forgotten people in Kenya who every day go without food, have insufficient clothes and nowhere to sleep.'

These are the real issues behind the 'mutinies' in East Africa—not 'communist plots'. And if these are the reactions in Kenya, after only four weeks of independence, one can imagine the feelings in Tanganyika where, after two years, despite some positive measures taken by the Government, considerable criticism is being voiced, not only against the Government's slowness but against the Government's attitude towards the people and their problems.

The issuing by Julius Nyerere, in the first week of January, of his ill-judged circular to Ministries, armed services and Civil Servants, stating that the policy of 'Africanisation' was to end and that henceforth Africans would have no priority in the recruitment, training and promotion of civil servants, naturally aroused a storm of protest. A delegation to the President from the Tanganyika Federation of Labour declared that this 'would take the people back to colonial days'. But this action by the Government was only one of a series of rebuffs to the people.

The Tanganyika soldiers have been trying for nine months to get the Government to act on the question of pay and promotion. Yet, at the time of the recent crisis, one captain was the highest command post held by Africans in the armed forces. When the trade union leaders demand the nationalisation of the big foreign-owned enterprises, they are denounced by the Tanganyika Labour Minister, Michael Kamaliza, as 'enemies of the unemployed people'. When trade unions demand higher pay, they are rebuked by Government leaders and accused of 'holding the country to ransom', and of trying to gain advantages 'at the expense of the peasantry'. Yet, the Chesworth Commission Report on Minimum Wages, issued in March 1962, revealed that average cash earnings for all workers in Tanganyika were only 96s. a month, and for agricultural workers only 67s.; that workers in Dar-es-Salaam ate a 'once a day meal'; that of every 1,000 children born, 400 die before they reach 15; that a random survey of 99 workers in building, transport, commercial and catering showed no less than 93 of them with signs of malnutrition, caused mainly through poverty. Nearly a year later, in July 1963, the Government had just got around to considering recommendations for the minimum wage; these were, for non-plantation agriculture, 80s. a month, and for gold mining and tea, 91s. a month—in

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both cases considerably below the Chesworth Commission proposals, and also below existing average earnings.

These realities cannot be brushed aside by accusations from Ministers that the trade unions are 'holding the country to ransom'. If the Government of Tanganyika—and this applies to the Governments of Kenya and Uganda, too—is to build up the country and advance to socialism, then it needs the utmost support from the working class and its trade unions. The heroic strikes of the workers were milestones in the national liberation struggle in East Africa. Many workers laid down their lives in the strikes in Mombasa (1939, 1944, 1947 and 1955), Tanga (1948), Dar-es-Salaam (1950 and again in 1958), on Tanganyika's sisal plantations (1957, 1958, 1959 and 1960), and Nairobi (general strike, 1950, busmen, 1958). All these historic actions were of utmost importance to the winning of national indpendence. That the organisations of the workers should now be treated in Tanganyika as if they were the enemy, and their leaders thrown into prison, is one of the most dangerous symptoms in the present situation. In Kenya, too, one finds the Minister of Labour warning trade unionists that if they 'abused' their freedom the Government would 'take it away'. Such talk and such a hostile attitude towards the claims of the workers will not solve a single one of the grave problems which have given rise to the recent explosions.

Nor will the calling in of British troops. The alacrity with which the British Tory Government rushed the troops out, their ill-concealed glee over their opportunity to 'recolonise', the pressure now being exerted to push through the East African Federation in conditions which could render it an imperialist creation, the open demands for military agreements with Britain and the maintenance of the British military base at Kamina—all this shows only too clearly the danger that these countries are now in.

The British imperialists are already preparing their plans for the next stage. *The Economist* (February 1, 1964), after its significant comment that 'With commendable foresight, the British forces were deployed in such a way that they were ready to go into action within minutes of being invited to do so', hastens to advise that 'the coming period will best be covered by a slow, pragmatic policy of helping to make sure that everything is securely pinned down before the troops are brought home'. This is what this journal terms 'enlightened neo-colonialism'! Anthony Sampson, writing in the same vein in *The Observer* (February 2, 1964), points out that 'To negotiate this retreat, while leaving some camouflaged military help, will call for

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great skill from the Army, and from Duncan Sandys or his successor'. The menace to East Africa is obvious.

The quicker the British troops are withdrawn, the better will be the opportunity for the governments of East Africa to get down to the real job at hand—freeing their countries from the grip of imperialism, refashioning their economies and improving the people's lives. The mutinies have been a serious warning. The people are impatient. Their revolution is not yet complete.

NATIONALISM AND OIL PROFITS

C. Enisah

A CRISIS of a new kind is developing in the Middle East. It is a crisis of a more intricate character than the sudden and often violent clashes that have convulsed this part of the world since the end of the war, yet it touches at the root causes of every one of these clashes. It is concerned with the production of oil, or to be more precise, with the sharing out of the huge profits that the oil companies derive from the exploitation of the Middle East oil wealth.

A body called the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (O.P.E.C.), which includes a number of Middle East States, is threatening to take collective action against the foreign oil companies unless they increase the royalties and taxes that they pay to the governments of these countries. Only a few years ago, a threat of this kind would have been unthinkable. And even today it is difficult to conceive that unpopular rulers such as the Shaikh of Kuwait, the Shah of Iran or the King of Saudi Arabia would be prepared to challenge their own supporters, the oil companies and the imperialist governments backing them. These outdated rulers have not changed, nor have the foreign monopolies become more amenable to the idea that every nation has the right to enjoy its own economic resources. When the Iranian people tried to nationalise their oil industry in the early 1950s the Shah fled from his country and the British government threatened military action. In 1956 a full-fledged war was waged against Egypt in an attempt to prevent the nationalisation of the Suez Canal, the oil route. The actions of the Iranian and Egyptian people were two highlights of the nationalist upsurge which is sapping at the foundations of imperialist domination in the Middle East. The successful nationalisation of the Suez Canal, more particu-

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larly, revealed the weakness of imperialism when it is confronted by an oppressed nation strongly united for its liberation and supported by the socialist camp and the other progressive forces in the world.

Since the Suez Crisis, the foreign oil companies have been under pressure from two directions—from capitalist competitors emboldened by the British and French defeat at Suez, and from the national movement which is compelling shaikhs and kings to take a stand against the foreign monopolies. American and British companies still have an overwhelming control over the oil of the Middle East, but they can no longer keep out capitalist competitors who until recently were unable to encroach on this reserved ground. Since 1957 Japanese and Italian oil companies have managed to enter the Middle East oil industry, and the terms of their oil agreements are much more favourable to the host countries than those of the old-established companies. A Japanese company operating in the Persian Gulf pays the Saudi and Kuwait governments 56 per cent and 57 per cent of the profits, instead of the usual 50 per cent. An Italian company pays up to 75 per cent. All the newcomers have accepted, or promised, to work in partnership with national State-owned companies. Thus a new pattern for oil concession agreements has been set which the old-entrenched companies find difficult to ignore.

The appearance of national oil companies, set up under intense popular pressure, is a development of the utmost importance. State-owned companies have been formed since 1957 in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Syria. They have been in existence in Iran and Egypt from an earlier date. In Iraq, a law establishing a State oil company was in the final stages of preparation when the Qasim government was overthrown in February 1963. Although their role is still small, they are a potential challenge to the foreign monopolies and a training ground for the workers of the region. Whether they will eventually dislodge the foreign companies will depend, of course, on the development of the liberation struggle.

Meanwhile, the concession agreements dictated to docile governments in an era when imperialism could dictate and oppress with impunity are now being put into question. Even in countries still in the hands of rulers closely tied to foreign interests like the King of Saudi Arabia or the shaiks of the Persian Gulf principalities 'under British protection' the impact of the national movement is such that the traditional dividing policies can no longer be maintained. In recent years, steps have been taken towards a united policy on oil questions which may open the way for important changes.

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Tentative moves for a united oil policy in the Middle East have taken place within the framework of two organisations: the Arab League and the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries. The Arab League sponsored the first Arab Oil Congress in 1959 and three others have been held since, the latest in November 1963. These congresses may not have lived up to the hopes of the Arab peoples, as they reflected the divisions of the Arab governments as much as their common aims. But they did serve as a forum where Arab spokesmen formulated their own views on the future of the industry. Independent Arab economists openly spoke of nationalisation as the legitimate right of the Arab nations, and the foreign companies were publicly told for the first time that the producing countries had the right 'to be released from or be able to override their contractual obligations'. In other words, that the national interests would not be for ever sacrificed to imperialist interests.

The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries came into existence in September 1960, primarily to present a united front of oil producing countries—the Arab countries plus Iran and Venezuela, then Indonesia—against a decision by the concessionary companies to reduce the price of Middle East crude oil. The fact that this reduction was unnoticed in Britain or elsewhere should be noted in passing as one more example of the methods used by the giant monopolies to line their own pockets. The Middle East governments were in truth concerned, not with this side of the question, but with the effect of the price reduction on their own royalties since these are calculated on the basis of the official prices. O.P.E.C.'s original concern with the exclusive question of prices is an illustration of its basic limitations. The peoples of the producing countries know full well that they will obtain their rightful benefit from their oil wealth not by higher prices, but by breaking the foreign monopoly over both production and prices. However, this self-imposed limitation could not be maintained for long. Once on the road of opposition to the companies, the debate developed to a much wider extent, and what is in question today is how to obtain for the producing countries a larger share of the phenomenal profits.

O.P.E.C. is now asking the companies to raise the royalties and taxes in such a way as to give the Middle East countries a total additional income estimated at some £70 million a year. This would seem a considerable figure, but it is only a small part of the companies' profits in this area. The cost of production of Middle East oil is the cheapest in the world, and the returns on the invested

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capital are consequently on an exceptionally high scale. For example, British Petroleum with a capital of £500 million and 90 per cent of its crude oil supplies coming from the Middle East, had in 1962 a gross income of £1,090·7 million and a net profit of £70·9 million after the payment of royalties and taxes at home and abroad, and big allowances for depletion and capital reserves. Royal Dutch Shell, another oil giant, declared for the same year a profit of £204·5 million. The extent of the possible reduction of the price of oil in the importing countries, were it not for these enormous profits, is a question of the greatest significance. It reveals the common interests of the peoples of the producing and consuming countries in abolishing the parasitic activities of the monopoly companies.

In a speech made last October on the subject of the discussions with the oil companies, the Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Faisal ibn Saud, warned the oil companies that unless they settle the dispute over revenues on acceptable terms, O.P.E.C. would 'prove its effectiveness by other means than negotiations'. If the members of O.P.E.C. do decide on collective action, they will find their peoples ready to support them with the utmost enthusiasm. The companies may well shed tears over a cut in their profits, but they have been allowed far too long to amass enormous fortunes at the expense of the Middle East peoples and of the peoples of Britain and other importing countries.

The existence of O.P.E.C. and its current debates show that the nationalist movement is compelling even the most outdated rulers to take a stand against the foreign monopolies. As the movement develops, the conflict will inevitably expand and bring nearer the expulsion of imperialist interests from the Middle East.

BOOKS

The Forest—A Personal Record of the Huk Guerilla Struggle in the Philippines

William J. Pomeroy

Central Books and International Publishers, New York. 224 pp. 32s.

EVERY GENERATION has produced exceptional men who have been prepared to risk their lives fighting for the emancipation of a country which is not their own. Such men are not the monopoly of any one nation, as we saw in the days of the International Brigade in Spain when men of many nations united in the understanding that freedom is indivisible. Such a man is William Pomeroy, an American writer, who joined the national liberation movement in the Philippines.

The Philippine Islands had been an American colony for half a cen-

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tury. When the Japanese invaders came in World War II the Filipino peasants organised a great liberation movement known as the Huk movement which freed much of the country from Japanese hands. But American troops came, arrested its leaders, brutally shot down liberation fighters, and under the name of independence, established a corrupt, semi-colonial puppet régime. The Huk movement regrouped as guerilla units in the mountain forests fighting for genuine independence.

Attached to the U.S. air force, Pomeroy saw for himself what the Americans did in the Philippines. After the war he came back and, with his Filipina wife, Celia, joined the Huk movement in 1950. This remarkable book is an account of their two years in the forest. We read of how the guerillas organised themselves, how they maintained unity and discipline, how they fought, how they secured supplies, how they organised conferences in the forest with American planes screaming overhead, how they ran off leaflets on a mimeograph machine and how, constantly on the move, nearly always wet and hungry, they evaded the enemy net, wading for miles waist-deep up rivers to avoid leaving a trail. We read of how they captured the town of Santa Cruz and released political prisoners while townspeople milled around laughing as at a fiesta.

And then as the Americans poured in military supplies, determined to crush the movement, the slow transformation of earlier victories into reversals, the slow fading of earlier hopes. In the end it becomes a fight for survival—a 63-day march through incessant rain with all food given out. 'We find a pair of abandoned dilapidated huts. No one is here. No one has been here for a very long time. It is like so many features of our movement now, the plan, the pledge, and afterwards silence, the missing ones, the unattended rendezvous'. And then 'I know that we shall go on enduring even if we are the last, and with hope, because the very act of doing so transfers the life that we embody to the hands of others who will come after'.

Pomeroy and his wife were captured in the end and spent ten years in gaol from which they have only recently been released. But, as he says, another generation is continuing the struggle. 'This is a story in which all people can help to make a fitting end'.

K.H.

London Landmarks: A Guide to Places where Marx, Engels and Lenin lived and worked

Communist Party, 12 pp. 1s. 6d.

SOCIALISTS WHO COME to London, whether from other parts of Great Britain or from abroad—and indeed many Londoners too—often ask the 'old hands' about the places associated with the pioneers of Socialism, and where the historic events in the development of the British labour movement took place. There is not likely to be a full handbook until we have a genuine Socialist government: but here is the first printed guide. In a series of brief and informative paragraphs, illustrated by a number of clear maps. You are told where Marx, Engels and Lenin lived and worked. It is cheap at the price, and something quite out of the ordinary.

A.R.

CORRECTION: January, p. 12, line 15, for 'cannot be' substitute 'has never been successfully'.

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FAR AND WIDE

THE international appeal of *L.M.* is brought home forcefully to us by our massive mail from abroad—this prophet is certainly not without honour in any country!

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Readers at home have been active on our behalf too. A Scottish building worker, already selling six copies at his trade union branch, made five new subscribers—a sterling job for *L.M.* Together with his own donation, a Staffordshire reader sends cash for copies to go to seven Labour Councillors 'to interest them in this wonderful issue'.

A Middlesex donor sums up: 'Your Editor's commentaries have overwhelmingly confirmed the basic correctness of Marxist thinking and kept my sometimes erring footsteps on the path of Marxist commonsense. He slays doubt'.

To our friends everywhere, our thanks for your support.

Helen Falber

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